

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The foregoing Amendment and the following Remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action issued on February 26, 2004 (Paper No. 7) in connection with the above-identified application, and are being filed within the three-month shortened statutory period set for filing the response.

Claims 1, 2, 4-14, and 16-35 are pending in the present application as currently amended. Claims 1, 2, 4-14, and 16-24 remain unchanged, and new claims 24-35 have been added to recite computer-readable medium claims that correspond to claims 13-24. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to the application by the Amendment.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-14, and 16-24, consistent with the following remarks.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 4-14, and 16-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Knox (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0103605). Applicants respectfully traverse the §103(a).

Independent claim 1 recites a status reporting system (SRS) for automatically reporting updated status of a project to an interested party based on status information stored in a status system. The SRS is communicatively coupled to the status system and has a monitoring device that contacts the status system to determine whether such status system has new status information stored therein and if so obtains such new status information from the status system. An internal mail device receives the obtained status information, *then* ascertains from the received status information the interested party, *then* locates an electronic mail address for the interested party, formats the received status information into a piece of

electronic mail which includes the received status information and the located electronic mail address, and forwards the piece of electronic mail to the interested party by way of an electronic mail service.

Claim 1 also recites that the SRS further comprises an ID database. The status system tags the status information stored therein with an ID identifying the interested party, and the ID database includes a record having the ID and the electronic mail address for the interested party. Thus, the internal mail device locates the electronic mail address for the interested party from the ID database based on the ID tagged to the received status information. *That is, the electronic mail address is derived from the ID database based on the ID from the information, and not vice versa.*

Independent claim 13 recites subject matter similar to that of claim 1 but in the form of a method.

As was previously set forth, in the present invention, a method and a system are provided to interface to a status system so as to automatically notify a customer of updates in status without providing the customer with direct access to the manufacturer's status system. In such method and system, each customer is represented by an ID, the status system tags each piece of status information stored therein with an ID identifying the corresponding customer, and the ID database includes a record having each ID and a corresponding electronic mail address for the customer. Thus, an internal mail device locates the electronic mail address for a customer from the ID database based on the ID tagged to a particular piece of received status information, and sends such status information to such customer at such address. *Significantly, the internal mail device and method as recited in claims 1 and 13 picks up each piece of status information without regard for any particular*

*customer and processes same by sending such piece of information to a particular customer based on an ID in such piece of information. In contradistinction, such device and method does not select a particular customer and then select each piece of information for that customer.*

As was previously pointed out, the Knox reference discloses a system that sends out status information to a client by way of e-mail, phone mail, or the like. In the Knox system, those clients who have requested status notifications are identified first (step 52 of Fig. 2), and for each identified client, a status database is then scanned for status information relating to such client (step 62) and such status information is then delivered to such client in the form of a message (step 64). Thus, the Knox system *first* searches the database based on the client and *then* notifies same. In contrast, and again, in the present invention, the database is searched for each new piece of status information and each such new piece of status information is then matched to a customer by way of an ID and delivered to same based on the ID as located in an ID database, where such ID database includes an electronic mail address for the customer and corresponding to the ID. To summarize, then, the present invention as recited in the claims starts with the status information and works to the customer, while the Knox system in contrast starts with the client and works toward the status information.

In response to arguments previously set forth by Applicants, the Examiner argues in the present Office Action at pages 2 and 3 that paragraph 17 of the Knox reference discloses starting with the status information and working to the customer. However, Applicants respectfully disagree, and in fact submit that a close reading of the entirety of the Knox reference makes clear that the Knox reference in fact discloses starting from the

customer and working to the status information. Such paragraph 17 is set forth with commentary based on the entirety of the Knox reference, with such commentary in bracketed bold:

[0017] Generally speaking, the invention is a system for providing status information to a client **{a particular client that has already been selected, as at step 52}** based on data residing in an electronic database. The database of the information is maintained and updated, and is periodically analyzed by the inventive system to determine whether at least a portion of the data has changed since the last analysis **{the database is analyzed for changed data based on a selection of a particular client, as at step 62}**. If so, the client is automatically informed by the system, which initiates an automatic voice response (AVR) call out to the client **{as at step 64, based on contact information for the client as obtained when the client was selected at step 52}**. For purposes of brevity herein, the term AVR is intended to encompass any similar technology that can perform an AVR function.

Thus, a reading of paragraph 17 in the context of the entire Knox reference makes clear that such Knox reference contemplates starting from the customer and working to the status information, and not starting with the status information and working to the customer, as is required by claims 1 and 13 of the present application.

Once again, the Knox reference does not have an internal mail device that receives status information and that ascertains from the received status information an interested party, as is required by claims 1 and 13, but instead starts with an interested party and then searches for status information corresponding to same. Moreover, the Knox system does not disclose an ID database, or that a status system tags status information stored therein with an ID identifying the interested party, or that the ID database includes a record having the ID and the electronic mail address for the interested party, as is also required by claims 1 and 13.

Thus, the Knox system also does not locate the electronic mail address for the interested party from the ID database based on the ID tagged to the received status information, as is further required by claims 1 and 13. Instead, and again, in the Knox reference, the Knox system selects a customer first, then locates status information therefore.

Accordingly, because the Knox reference contemplates starting from the customer and working to the status information, and does not disclose, suggest, or hint at starting with the status information and working to the customer, as is required by claims 1 and 13 of the present application, Applicants respectfully submit that the Knox reference cannot be applied to make obvious claims 1 or 13 or any claims depending therefrom, including claims 2, 4-12, 14, and 16-24. Likewise, Applicants respectfully submit that the Knox reference cannot be applied to make obvious corresponding claims 25-35 for the same reasons. As a result, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection.

In view of the foregoing Amendment and Remarks, Applicants respectfully

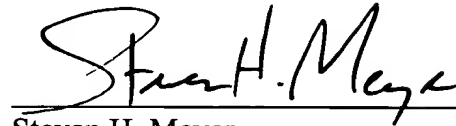
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submit that the present application including claims 1, 2, 4-14, and 16-35 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: May 26, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven H. Meyer", is written over a horizontal line.

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